

# ADELAIDE INSTITUTE

PO Box 3300  
Adelaide 5067  
Australia  
Mob: 61+401692057  
Email: [info@adelaideinstitute.org](mailto:info@adelaideinstitute.org)  
Web: <http://www.adelaideinstitute.org>

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## A Letter to the Editor - Adelaide Institute

Dear Editor:

I was alarmed to read without qualifying editorial comment the letter published on the front cover of your Adelaide Institute *Online No 808* October 2014. The letter from 'J-B' notes with melancholy of the writer's early dalliance with prostitutes at the establishment of a 'Madam French' in Madras in October 1944, noting in particular that the writer's "favourite was an Indian princess aged about 14."

The writer then goes on to lament the fate of Rolf Harris apparently hard done by, according to the writer, because the crime was so old and well because it "seems to me that the older man gets, the younger he likes his women"; indeed that "to elderly Australian Aborigines [sic] of the past it was the natural order of things" and likewise normal behaviour in PNG where the writer tells us he spent 31 years.

It really beggars belief that the Adelaide Institute would publish such offensive and dangerous filth such as this! It is not so much that I am appalled by this writer's attitudes, which I am, but that by publishing them you would print them in a way which apparently endorses this person's views. If I thought for a moment that you did I would write to condemn you but I know from our conversation in Canberra recently that you certainly do not – at least that was the very strong message I received from that discussion.

For the benefit of all, the relevant part of that discussion included reference to some prominent scholars whose work you admire but who you said were personally disappointing in their moral behaviour. That behaviour which you condemned was – to use your own expressions – an "inability to keep their pants zipped" and worse still a "degenerate" proclivity in some cases for younger and younger women as they got older.

Yet it is precisely this 'degenerate' view – along with what appears to be an admission of statutory rape of a minor – that we find in the J-B letter published so prominently and without editorial condemnation in your publication! Was there a publishing glitch by

which your editorial condemnation was left-out the final printing – or was it perhaps one of those 'senior moments' of forgetfulness that we had a laugh about in Canberra which meant it was left off by mistake?

Speaking to you at length as we did I was struck forcefully by not only your commitments to truth and to racial peace and harmony but also your personal integrity and your decency and strong personal standards on issues of personal morality.

I don't know what it is about people like J-B. As far as I am concerned the only time when it is appropriate to be attracted to a 14 year old is when you yourself are a young teenager, and that the natural course of a healthy mind is that as one ages to progressively become attracted to more mature women. It strikes me that JB is suffering from some clear degenerate illness and has a lack of moral compass. They are certainly deluded. I would recommend J-B and anyone else like who shares his view sees the film of J.M. Coetze's 'Stray Dogs'. There is a marvellous moment in the film when the female protagonist, the main character's sister responds to her brother about his story of his sexual relations with his young female student, which we see as akin to if not exactly rape of the student. His sister virtually spits her reply at her brother, so disgusted is she, "do you REALLY think a girl of that age actually enjoys having sex with an old man like you?"

Keep up the good work. I hate to see it when you allow yourself through such slippages to be exposed to critics who seek to destroy you and your good work of historical revision.

Regards  
Chris Williams - Canberra

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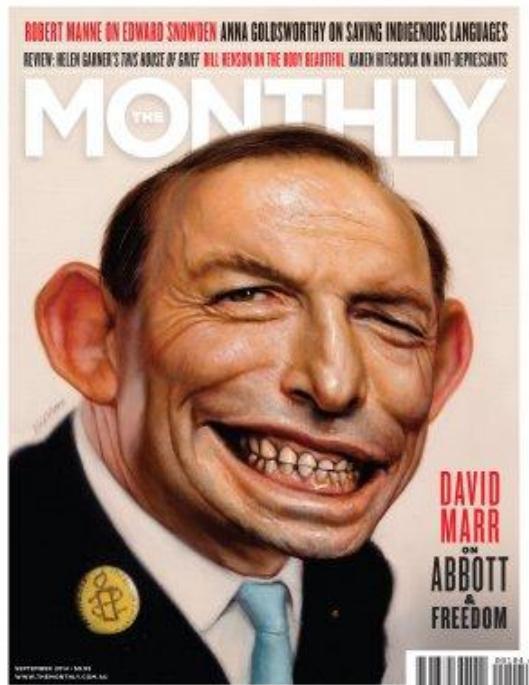
**Fredrick Töben replies:** Point taken, but please note what preceded the letter: A quote from Immanuel Kant! My personal Categorical Imperative is: You must know everything about life but you must not have done everything in life!

...now a must-read for all those who remember Tony Abbott as a Freedom Fighter devoid of the power-kick and still imbued with compassion and empathetic understanding ...

THE MONTHLY ESSAYS  
**FREEDOM ABBOTT**

**The brief life and quiet death of Tony Abbott's love of liberty**

BY [DAVID MARR](#)



SEPTEMBER 2014

In Tony Abbott's Australia, a young woman faces jail because word got out that one of his daughters was given a \$60,000 scholarship to study at the Whitehouse Institute of Design. This scholarship was never advertised. Students at the college in Sydney had no idea such largesse was available. News of Frances Abbott's win provoked a two-month investigation by the New South Wales Police and a charge of accessing restricted data without authorisation. Penalty: imprisonment for a maximum of two years.

How different it was all those years ago when young Tony won his Rhodes. Now that's a scholarship. The win wasn't a secret. No one faced jail when the news broke. But the young man and the prime minister have this in common: a most uncertain respect for free speech. Abbott had made his name at the University of Sydney as one of Bob Santamaria's acolytes working to silence student unions by starving them of funds. The day the Rhodes was announced, in November 1980, he told the *Sydney Morning Herald* that John Kerr, Malcolm Fraser and the uranium industry were not "legitimate concerns" of student unions. "In my view, vast amounts of student money are being spent on extreme causes."

Abbott never seemed the sort of man who would go out on a limb for liberty. In parliament he made a spectacle of himself early on by suing over a silly slur in Bob Ellis' book *Goodbye Jerusalem*. He was up to his neck in the legal manoeuvring that landed Pauline Hanson in jail. He had the courage to demur when John Howard put WorkChoices before cabinet, but

there is no record of him standing up to his patron when Howard prosecuted whistleblowers; stripped NGOs of funding; whipped museums into line; widened sedition laws; imprisoned the innocent Dr Mohamed Haneef without charge; and subjected the ABC to a decade of partisan abuse. When it came to liberty, Abbott was one of the Coalition pack.

Yet one morning in August 2012 he walked into the Amora Hotel in Sydney and pledged to take up arms in the Freedom Wars. "We are the freedom party," he told an exuberant crowd gathered by the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA).

*We stand for the freedoms which Australians have a right to expect and which governments have a duty to uphold. We stand for freedom and will be freedom's bulwark against the encroachments of an unworthy and dishonourable government.*

No Coalition leader has ever talked freedom as Abbott did that morning. The passion, the rhetoric and the undertakings he gave were new in the politics of this country. He might have been an American on the stump. Angels sang and trumpets sounded. He was promising to do more than stop the boats, axe the tax and end the waste. As prime minister, he would restore our lost freedoms. A new Abbott had appeared from nowhere to join the others who jostle for our attention. Politics Abbott is the one who rules them all. Values Abbott has his commitment to faith and a unique political past. Intellectual Abbott can turn out opinion pieces on anything from reshaping the federation to the future of marriage. But here on the stage of this big city hotel was Freedom Abbott:

*Without free speech, free debate is impossible and, without free debate, the democratic process cannot work properly nor can misgovernment and corruption be fully exposed. Freedom of speech is part of the compact between citizen and society on which democratic government rests. A threat to citizens' freedom of speech is more than an error of political judgement. It reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the give and take between government and citizen on which a peaceful and harmonious society is based.*

Two years later, I sit here writing Freedom Abbott's obituary. I'll honour the form with the story of his rise from nowhere, the hopes he raised in his brief life, his impact on the politics of the nation, and his sudden death in August in the same week the cops charged the supposed Whitehouse whistleblower. They were rough days for liberty. By the time the prime minister abandoned his crusade to gut the *Racial Discrimination Act*, promised new powers to ASIO and prepared to store our metadata for the use of intelligence agencies, Freedom Abbott was on the slab.

The death wrecked Tim Wilson's Free Speech 2014 symposium. Gathered in Sydney that week by the new human rights commissioner were figures from the left, right and centre, a peace council of the factions called to explore the great prospects for liberty under an

Abbott government. But the day was a wake, with the same coffee and smoked salmon that come with a funeral – and the same gloom. The attorney-general, George Brandis, found another funeral to go to at the last minute. It wasn't brave, but what could he have said to us? His libertarian rhetoric, even more lyrical than Abbott's, had just been jacked by his master. The Freedom Wars seem over without a shot being fired. So much praise had been wasted, so many hopes dashed, and now so much blame is being dished out. Abbott's naïve admirers have turned on him for betraying Australia. In the aftermath of an abandoned war, the politics of liberty have shifted to a dark place. "Dead is dead," said Gertrude Stein. "But dead is not done. Not over."

Abbott could always talk freedom. It was a topic fit for think tanks: civilised, big-picture, fundamental but tame. He always saw the dangers. They went back to Genesis: "In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve could do almost as they pleased. But freedom turned out to have its limits and its abuses, as this foundational story makes only too clear." Cynics might argue the church had to be fought tooth and nail for liberal democracy to emerge. But Abbott has always said we have Christianity to thank for freedom and "the presumption of innocence, universal suffrage, limited government, and religious, cultural and political pluralism". Among today's great defenders of "freedom under law" he lists the crown and the papacy. He never thought freedom owed much to the left. Tom Paine is not among his heroes. No revolution, not even the French, is given credit for liberty's rise. Nor are unions, the labour movement and Marx. He is polite to Americans: he acknowledges the overthrow of George III matters to them, though he's sure it means nothing to us. His praise stops short of the First Amendment. He doesn't gush about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

For the past few centuries, freedom has spoken English. True, there were one or two upheavals along the way, but Abbott has always seen peaceful England setting the standard for liberty's rise. He doesn't turn to the great legal theorists to make this point. He quotes Tennyson's lines about "A land of settled government, / A land of just and old renown, / Where Freedom slowly broadens down / From precedent to precedent". This is his go-to quote when he talks freedom. He finds these lines pithy and beautiful. He loves to quote them when he's talking liberty to American think tanks. Sometimes he rolls on to the next verse, condemning another England where "banded unions persecute / Opinions, and induce a time / When single thought is civil crime, / And individual freedom mute".

An Oxford man is expected to dish out this sort of stuff. But an Oxford man might also have a closer look at what Tennyson is writing here: a Tory attack on the *Great Reform Act* of 1832 and the political division it provoked in England. His favourite quote on freedom is, in fact, an attack on one of the key, hard-fought victories against aristocratic power in Britain. Perhaps Abbott has no idea of this. Perhaps he's just smitten by the poetry. What's certain is his affection for the idea that liberty evolves naturally over time, dropping gently from the heavens. This is not freedom made by

great upheavals or witnessed in declarations. There is nothing hard and fast about it. More than anything, it's a matter of instinct. You know it when you *feel* it.

Abbott was always worried about the need to keep a brake on freedom. It's the lesson of Adam and Eve, the teaching of his faith, and the fear that drove Santamaria's crusade all those years ago in the universities of Australia. The Santa crowd saw themselves as campaigning for order in a world where too much freedom might mean curtains for civilisation. Abbott has grown since then as a man and a politician, but in 2002, as a young minister in Howard's government, troubled by divorce and drugs, he was still lashing out at

*a highly contagious mutant strain of liberalism that can't work out when one person's freedom stops and another's starts, and which feels constrained by the ideal of freedom from discouraging (let alone preventing) self-indulgent, counter-productive and destructive behaviour. The liberal state carries within it the seeds of its own destruction if it is just liberal, if it cannot coerce or even criticise the misuse of freedom.*

Abbott believed in a liberty of rules with freedom restrained and protected by the state. He doesn't celebrate free spirits except, rather touchingly, those who ride bikes: "The bike is a freedom machine." And he finds repugnant the idea of having a bill of rights to guarantee our liberties. He is not alone there on either side of the House of Representatives. Politicians look after themselves. Their instincts are finely honed. As Abbott told Laurie Oakes one night in 2008: "The problem with a bill of rights is that it takes power off the elected politicians."



**Tony Abbott sets off on an early morning ride in Brisbane, August 2013.**

**© Alex Ellinghausen / Fairfax Syndication**

Freedom Abbott was still a few years away. Politics Abbott played a part in his unexpected birth. From the US, Australian conservatives had imported the strategy of branding their opponents – "liberals" there and "the left" here – as enemies of freedom. This works better in the US, where there's a big constituency for the notion that controlling guns, taxing carbon and giving medicine to the poor are a frontal attack on freedom in a nation whose defining purpose is the pursuit of freedom. Here, we hanker as much for fairness as we do liberty. We don't fear government. We're not happy about paying tax but we don't see it as a fundamental assault on freedom.

But Australian commentators took up the drumbeat of Fox News, and Liberal Party leaders began, shyly at first, to present themselves as evangelists for liberty facing the hostility of the left. "The left has embraced a new authoritarianism," Brandis declared in April this year, in a ripping interview with the libertarian Brendan O'Neill for the website *Spiked*. "Having abandoned the attempt to control the commanding heights of the economy, they now want to control the

commanding heights of opinion, and that is even more dangerous."

Brandis invokes the ghosts of Stalin and Pol Pot to press home his attack on the left. Those with a taste for personal abuse more developed than mine might call this line of argument insane. I call it surprising. "How can it be," Brandis asked a crowd at the Centre for Independent Studies in August last year, "that at the end of a century that saw the embrace by the authoritarian left of murder on an industrial scale as a political and ideological method, how can it be that we, on our side of politics, abandoned human rights as a cause to the left?" His message was: "We have to re-embrace the human rights debate. We have to remind people that we in the Liberal Party are the party of human rights."

More than anything, the left is charged with smothering dissident voices in the debate over global warming. They treat sceptics with disrespect. Laugh at Lord Monckton. Reserve ABC science shows for scientists. Fail to give dissenters an honoured place on the platform. The exercise of judgement – scientific and editorial – in the debate is condemned as the bullying, authoritarian, anti-free speech behaviour of the left.

When Abbott jumped the ditch in late 2009 to join the sceptics, this became part of his thinking. So too did the American notion that small government equals freedom. He had dismissed the idea earlier that year in his memoir, *Battlelines*, but it began to shape his rhetoric. Replying to Rudd's budget in 2010, the new leader of the Opposition declared: "The Coalition wants lower taxes, smaller government and greater freedom."

And the leap to the sceptics drew him closer to Andrew Bolt, an eloquent News Ltd voice on the side of the Liberal Party and a scourge of plans to combat climate change. Abbott came to comfort the shattered columnist a few days after the Federal Court's mortifying judgement in the case brought by Aborigines Bolt had attacked baselessly in the *Herald Sun*. Bolt told John van Tiggelen of *Good Weekend* that his "very influential" guest had "dropped in to urge him to keep going on all fronts. The impromptu dinner guest told him and his wife that his TV show, merely by existing, gave heart to a good many people."

Abbott did not defend Bolt's journalism: "The article for which Andrew Bolt was prosecuted under this legislation was almost certainly not his finest." But he called for the gutting of section 18C of the *Racial Discrimination Act*, which penalises speech likely to "offend, insult, intimidate or humiliate" on grounds of race. The court had found that Bolt ticked all four boxes. Free speech advocates, long worried that the act set the bar too low, were calling for "offend" and "insult" to be pruned from the section. Julia Gillard's government was hammered for defending 18C as it stood.

"This law will haunt Labor and constitute another chapter in the degeneration of its culture, a process now dangerously advanced," declared the *Australian's* editor-at-large, Paul Kelly. "Indeed, it is hard to find a more perfect example of the trap of political correctness and the legal-human rights culture of legislating for good behaviour than this application of the *Racial Discrimination Act*." He commended Abbott

and Brandis for swiftly promising to fix the act. "It signals a new cultural attack on Labor on grounds of political correctness."



**Tony Abbott addresses the Petroleum Club in Houston, Texas, June 2014. © Tony Abbott**

Freedom Abbott was a bastard child of the Culture Wars. He quoted Edmund Burke and John Stuart Mill, and even Voltaire, but his passion for freedom wasn't a thing of abstract philosophy. Abbott was about to do what he did so well as leader of the Opposition: blast the government with whatever was to hand.

Something else was in the air in the days of Freedom Abbott's birth. *The Australian* had received a fresh cache of documents about Bruce Wilson, the crooked former Australian Workers Union official who was once Julia Gillard's lover. Earlier attempts to smear her with Wilson's crimes had damaged Gillard badly. But she fought back hard and saw Bolt silenced, Glenn Milne dumped by the *Australian* and shock jock Michael Smith ousted from Sydney radio station 2UE. Now after a year's lull, the story had returned. It was gold for Abbott, but, inside and outside the government, News Ltd was being accused of a vicious beat-up. *The Australian* on Saturday, 4 August 2012 had the story everywhere: on page 1, 'Cops wanted Gillard's ex charged'; on page 2: 'Coalition wants alleged bagman investigated'; on page 23, Cut and Paste: 'Fifty shades of nay, or how the real Dr No of politics keeps Labor from getting tied up'; and on the same page an editorial: 'AWU scandal questions linger'.

Two days later, Freedom Abbott materialised in the ballroom of the Amora Hotel, electrifying a crowd of 300. His rhetoric was wonderful. Again and again, he was stopped by applause. He was so forgiving about the press. No journalist could fail to be pleased by his promise to protect speech that wasn't always accurate and wasn't always fair: "The price of free speech ... is that offence will be given, facts will be misrepresented, and sometimes lies will be told. Truth, after all, only emerges from such a process. But thanks to free speech, error can be exposed, corruption revealed, arrogance deflated, mistakes corrected, the right upheld and truth flaunted in the face of power."

Then his focus narrowed: "This is not a government that argues its case. Mostly, it simply howls down its critics using the megaphone of incumbency ... Late last year, Communications Minister Stephen Conroy accused the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* of a deliberate campaign to 'bring the government down'. The prime minister had a screaming match with former News Ltd boss John Hartigan over an article about her prior-to-entering-parliament dealings with a union official ... The prime minister personally insisted that News Ltd in Australia had 'questions to answer' in the wake of the UK phone-hacking scandal even though she was not able to specify what these might be. It seems obvious

that her real concern was not Fleet Street-style illegality but News Ltd's coverage of her government and its various broken promises, new taxes and botched program."

News Ltd was facing a distant threat on another flank. The former Federal Court judge Ray Finkelstein had delivered his report on media regulation. Controversy had been raging for months. All the proprietors were furious, but at the Amora Hotel Abbott leapt only to the defence of News Ltd, claiming Finkelstein's proposed News Media Council "looks like an attempt to warn off News Ltd from pursuing anti-government stories".

Freedom Abbott drew his first breaths speaking the language of a News Ltd executive. Hardly anyone noticed at the time. Abbott's commitment to fight the Freedom Wars made the headlines. He nominated Brandis as his consigliore in the Coalition campaign for liberty. An agenda of sorts emerged: 18C would be slashed, anti-discrimination laws wound back and a "freedom audit" conducted of all Commonwealth laws to identify those that violated traditional rights and freedoms. Asked if he had what it took to achieve these reforms, Brandis replied: "I was born for it."

Abbott's calls for fresh candour and vigour in public debate were pitch perfect. The week before polling day he told the *Australian*:

*Any suggestion you can have free speech as long as it doesn't hurt people's feelings is ridiculous. If we are going to be a robust democracy, if we are going to be a strong civil society, if we are going to maintain that great spirit of inquiry, which is the spark that has made our civilisation so strong, then we've got to allow people to say things that are unsayable in polite company. We've got to allow people to think things that are unthinkable in polite company and take their chances in open debate.*

Australians frustrated by Canberra's old indifference to liberty could cast their vote on 7 September 2013 with reason to hope. Even on the left there were signs of goodwill. Think tanks were cautiously delighted. But on victory night, something odd happened. I was there at the Four Seasons Hotel in Sydney in a throng of excited Liberals, drooling lobbyists and exhausted journalists. Flanked by his wife and daughters, the new prime minister declared Australia open for business. All the old mantras about boats and waste and carbon tax had a run, but there wasn't a word said about liberty. Freedom Abbott didn't show.

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The swearing in of a cabinet was once a silent show except for the muttering of oaths. Now there are speeches. In the drawing room of Yarralumla with his cabinet duly sworn, Tony Abbott faced Quentin Bryce. He told Her Excellency: "We hope to be judged by what we have done rather than by what we have said we would do." Fair enough.

**10 October 2013:** The state and territory attorneys-general meet in Sydney without discussing shield laws. The issue was on the agenda. With the change of government it vanished. It hasn't appeared since. Efforts begun under Gillard to introduce uniform national laws to give effective protection to journalists and their sources have ceased.

**25 October:** Scott Morrison first utters the phrase "on water operations" to justify the unprecedented secrecy

that surrounds the Abbott government's blockade of refugee boats. Morrison whittles away the few rights and freedoms left to those caught up in Operation Sovereign Borders.

**2 December:** Brandis authorises an ASIO raid on the Canberra office of Bernard Collaery, the lawyer representing East Timor in its dispute with Australia over the Timor Sea Treaty. In March this year, the International Court of Justice at The Hague orders Australia to seal the material seized and keep it from all officials involved in the dispute. The order is binding.

**3 December:** Abbott rages against the ABC and the "left-wing" *Guardian* for together reporting that Australian spy agencies had targeted the phones of Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and his wife. "The ABC seemed to delight in broadcasting allegations by a traitor," he later told Ray Hadley of the Sydney radio station 2GB. "This gentleman Snowden, or this individual Snowden, who has betrayed his country and in the process has badly, badly damaged other countries that are friends of the United States, and of course the ABC didn't just report what he said, they took the lead in advertising what he said."

**11 December:** Brandis announces terms of reference for the Australian Law Reform Commission's audit of Commonwealth laws that compromise freedom. The terms' focus is not individual liberty but "commercial and corporate regulation; environmental regulation; and workplace relations". Free speech barely makes the list. Brandis tells the *Australian Financial Review* he is most perturbed by the "reversal of the onus of proof, the creation of strict liability offences, the removal of lawyer-client privilege and removal of rights against self-incrimination". It reads like a list of everything tax evaders loathe about the law.

**17 December:** Brandis appoints the policy director of the IPA, Tim Wilson, to the Australian Human Rights Commission. Wilson's mission is to restore balance to a body which the attorney-general believes "has become increasingly narrow and selective in its view of human rights" under Labor. This is code for the culture war complaint that the left is manipulating anti-discrimination laws to impose its moral agenda on a reluctant society. The Bolt case is a particular focus of the fear that protecting blacks, gays, foreigners and cripples from discrimination is stripping the rest of us of our freedom.

**29 January 2014:** Abbott blasts the ABC for reporting claims that Australian military personnel have punished asylum seekers by burning their hands. "I think it dismays Australians when the national broadcaster appears to take everyone's side but our own," says the prime minister. "You shouldn't leap to be critical of your own country." News Ltd joins the attack. The ABC falters. Its managing director, Mark Scott, apologises for imprecise wording in the original report, but three days later, Fairfax's man in Indonesia, Michael Bachelard, finds asylum seeker Yousif Ibrahim Fasher: "He says he has no doubt that what he saw at close quarters on about January 3 was three people's hands being deliberately held to a hot exhaust pipe by Australian naval personnel to punish them for protesting, and to deter others from doing one simple thing: going to the toilet too often."



**Tony Abbott at the Devondale Murray Goulburn Processing Facilities, July 2014. © Tony Abbott**

**6 March:** Abbott threatens to cut the ABC's budget if it doesn't cave in to Chris Kenny. The Chaser team had crudely photoshopped the head of the News Ltd pundit onto a man with his pants down mounting a labradoodle. Kenny sued for \$90,000. Missing in action is Abbott's defence of lively debate where "offence will be given, facts will be misrepresented". He tells 2GB's Ben Fordham the ABC should settle the case or else: "Government money should be spent sensibly and defending the indefensible is not a very good way to spend government money. Next time the ABC comes to the government looking for more money, this is the kind of thing that we would want to ask questions about." The ABC buckles. Kenny gets an apology and cash.

**13 March:** Brandis decrees artists who refuse private sponsorship on political grounds may be stripped of public funding. Troubled by Transfield's links to offshore detention centres, a handful of artists had pressured the company to withdraw sponsorship from the Sydney Biennale. Brandis asks: "If the Sydney Biennale doesn't need Transfield's money, why should they be asking for ours?" He directs the Australia Council to find a formula for deciding when public funding will be withdrawn because private sponsorship has been "unreasonably" rejected. He does not rule out compelling arts organisations to take tobacco money. Months later, the council is still labouring over the words. However it's done, Brandis wants artists to know they will pay a price for embarrassing the government. This threatens direct political intervention for the first time in the allocation of Australia Council funds.

**24 March:** Brandis tells Senator Nova Peris: "People do have a right to be bigots, you know." The next day, he releases draft legislation to gut sections 18C and 18D of the *Racial Discrimination Act*. Abbott backs him. The proposal – drafted by Brandis himself – would allow almost unrestrained racist abuse in the name of freedom. Ethnic community leaders lobby for the act to be left as it is. Polls swiftly show nine out of ten Australians disapprove of the changes. Three-quarters of the 4100 submissions received by Brandis' department are hostile. The department blocks their release.

**23 May:** Morrison strips the Refugee Council of Australia of half a million dollars allocated in the budget only ten days before. The minister explains: "It's not my view, or the government's view, that taxpayer funding should be there for what is effectively an advocacy group." The CEO of the council, Paul Power, calls the cuts petty and vindictive. "This in many ways illustrates the state of the relationship between the non-government sector – particularly

organisations working on asylum issues – and the government at the moment."

**1 July:** Community legal centres across Australia are also forbidden to use Commonwealth money for advocacy or to campaign for law reform. During the Labor years, funding for NGOs had come with the guarantee that they were free "to enter into public debate or criticism of the Commonwealth, its agencies, employees, servants or agents". Under Abbott, the guarantee disappears. So do many sources of independent advice. The budgets of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, the Environmental Defender's Offices and the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples are slashed. Axed are the Social Inclusion Board, the National Housing Supply Council, the National Policy Commission on Indigenous Housing, the National Children and Family Roundtable, the Advisory Panel on Positive Ageing, and the committee of independent medics advising the refugee detention network, the Immigration Health Advisory Group.

**16 July:** Brandis threatens laws to double the sentence for reporting "special intelligence operations" by ASIO. Whistleblowers would not be protected, and journalists would not even need to know the operations were "special" to find themselves in prison for up to a decade. No public interest defence would be available. The shadow attorney-general, Mark Dreyfus, says: "We will not tolerate legislation which exposes journalists to criminal sanction for doing their important work, work that is vital to upholding the public's right to know."

**4 August:** Twenty-two-year-old student Freya Newman, a former part-time librarian at the Whitehouse Institute of Design, is charged with unauthorised access to restricted data following reports of Frances Abbott's scholarship, after complaints to the police by the institute. The chair of the institute is Liberal Party donor and friend of the prime minister Les Taylor.

**5 August:** Abbott announces the metadata of all Australians is to be kept by internet service providers for two years and made available to ASIO and police. That trawl will, of course, include the metadata of whistleblowers and journalists. He abandons at the same time his two-year crusade to amend the *Racial Discrimination Act*. Both moves he justifies in the light of terrorist outrages by Australian nationals in Syria. "When it comes to counter-terrorism, everyone needs to be part of 'Team Australia,'" he says, "and I have to say that the government's proposals to change 18C of the *Racial Discrimination Act* have become a complication in that respect. I don't want to do anything that puts our national unity at risk at this time, and so those proposals are now off the table."

Freedom Abbott had outlived his purpose. He was useful in Opposition. That's when phony contests like the Culture Wars can wreak havoc on your opponents. But to keep the banner of freedom flying in office was always going to be hard. No Australian government has ever managed the feat. And Abbott is proving no political pioneer. Nothing done in his first year advances the cause he championed in Opposition. His rhetoric has proved threadbare. Poor old Values Abbott died on budget night when an ordinary Liberal Party

agenda was served up to the nation. A couple of months later, Freedom Abbott followed him to the grave.

The IPA marked the burial with a brutal full-page ad in the *Australian*. "Freedom of speech is an essential foundation of democracy," said Abbott across the top of the page. Across the bottom the IPA replied: "We agree, Prime Minister. That's why we will fight to repeal section 18C of the *Racial Discrimination Act*. Even if you won't." John Roskam, the executive director of the IPA, spoke of a party base betrayed and Australians left "sad, angry, disappointed and worried" by Abbott. "If the Coalition can sacrifice freedom of speech so easily, there's nothing to stop, say, freedom of religion or the principle of equal education for girls and boys one day being treated in exactly the same way ... under Tony Abbott, the Coalition believes freedom of speech is a threat to national unity."

Brandis was simply humiliated.

Muslims were furious. Every ethnic community in Australia had put up their hand to protest, but Abbott had used the Muslims to cover his retreat. Tabloid pundits rammed the message home. It didn't help that depraved clowns with Australian passports were cutting off heads for the Caliphate. Bolt blamed the Jews, the Muslims and, most of all, politicians who caved in to Muslim constituents:

*Pardon? We must placate Muslim Australians by restricting our freedom to say something critical of their culture, for example, extremists being so prone to jihad? Of course other ethnic and religious groups – not least Jews – also fought to save these restrictions. But make no mistake: muzzling Australians is now seen as necessary to please migrant communities. Among Liberal backbenchers who fought Abbott's changes, none was louder than Craig Laundy, whose seat of Reid has a Muslim minority comprising 10 per cent of the vote ... politicians are now so desperate for these blocs of ethnic votes that they sacrifice Australian values to accommodate imported ones.*

Tim Wilson was left with no freedom agenda. The day Brandis was supposed to address Free Speech 2014, Wilson announced he would soon set off on a "Rights and Responsibilities" tour of the nation to hear what we have on our minds. He will likely discover nothing new. Our worries don't change much with time: the fate of the ABC under Coalition governments; the expanding reach of intelligence agencies; heavy-handed film censorship; feeble protection for whistleblowers and journalists; punitive laws against demonstrators; attacks on freedom of association; and the old bugbear of defamation. Nothing stifles public

debate in this country as much as the fear of being sued for defamation. But a smart guy like Wilson knows even before he sets out that the Human Rights Commission can't fix much on that list. Almost all our worries are matters of state law. In July, the retiring disability discrimination commissioner, Graeme Innes, told the National Press Club: "The best way, frankly, for the attorney to provide the commission with the greater capacity to deal with the freedoms he talks about would be to put forward legislation for a charter of rights."

That's the last thing Abbott stands for, though there is a fascinating shift underway in conservative Australia. Once despised as undemocratic, a bill of rights embedded in the constitution is beginning to be seen as a last resort to save our Way of Life. Even conservative Christians, hitherto the most implacable opponents of anything like the US First Amendment, are beginning to see their salvation might lie in such a form of words: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

And Abbott? Abandoning his freedom crusade has left him a diminished figure: not a pioneer of liberty in anyone's eyes, just a blowhard on the campaign trail. The promises of freedom join all the other broken promises. Under Abbott no laws limiting freedom have changed for the better. Movement has all been the other way. The Coalition is running on instinct. We are back where we were under Howard. Freedom counts for little in political contest in this country. The only Abbott that matters, Politics Abbott, soldiers on. He has not lost his faith in himself. Astride the grave of Freedom Abbott in early August, as he ramped up ASIO's powers and ditched his libertarian ambitions for 18C, he was still declaring: "I'm a passionate supporter of free speech."

**A lot has happened since that night, but this essay grew out of the 2014 John Button Lecture for the Melbourne School of Government delivered on 23 July.**

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR DAVID MARR**

David Marr is a writer and journalist. He is the author of the award-winning *Patrick White: A Life, Quarterly Essay 38, 'Power Trip'*, and co-author of *Dark Victory*. He has been a reporter with *Four Corners* and the host of *Media Watch*.

<http://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2014/september/1409493600/david-marr/freedom-abbott>

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...and a memory from 2010 – and 1987 ...

## **NORTH COAST VOICES**

THIS BLOG IS OPEN TO ANY WHO WISH TO COMMENT ON AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY, THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT OR POLITICAL SHENANIGANS AT FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

### **A circumspect Tony Abbott? Who da thunk it!**

Sunday, 7 November 2010

Opposition Leader Tony Abbott was out and about last week [trying to plow fertile ground in the Adelaide hills](#) and raise up the best xenophobic crop of 2010.

In the process he [once again came face to face](#) with alleged Holocaust-denier Gerald Fredrick Toben.

Given the rich mine of embarrassing archived material from his university and journalism days, it was rather surprising to find his somewhat sympathetic 1987 Bulletin magazine article on Toben contained no over

the top right-wing judgments of Australian society which might come back to haunt him.



Mr Abbott talks to Holocaust denier Fredrick Toben yesterday

It seems a restrained and relatively balanced Tony Abbott may once have existed in an alternative universe....

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### **Case of the teacher who wasn't kept in Tony Abbott, *The Bulletin*, 1987**

Doctor Fredrick Toben has achieved what many thought impossible. He has been sacked for "incompetence" as a teacher in an Australian school. Despite the quoted desire of NSW Education Minister Rod Cavalier to weed out "malignerers in the staffroom", dismissal is not a threat our teachers normally face. Educators contacted by *The Bulletin* said that any dismissal was rare and dismissal for alleged incompetence almost unknown. The picture which emerges is of teaching authorities who take a benign, almost parental view of their employees' failings.

Most teachers dismissals follow significant criminal convictions. Others occur only after the failure of an elaborate counselling process. In Australian schools, complaints against teachers are normally handled by principals. If not resolved, they are referred to the department of education.

The Victorian Ministry of Education, which employs 55,000 teachers, dismisses "three or four" for incompetence each year - usually when "an element of senility" is involved. An official of a Catholic education office in Victoria, employing about 1000 teachers, said that he had "never written a letter of dismissal".

As a spokesman for the NSW Education Department - which employs nearly 48,000 teachers and has dismissed "a very few" - put it: "If someone has successfully passed teachers college, there are usually personal reasons for sub-standard performance...Quite often, with a particular group, a person may not feel comfortable...We would usually transfer such a person to another school where there was more motivation and security..."

Only when subsequent inspection shows no improvement and when a teacher declines to resign, may formal disciplinary proceedings be instituted - possibly leading to dismissal. Most teachers resign at this point. Fredrick Toben stubbornly refused because he had done nothing wrong.

Toben's troubles began in 1983 when the Goroke Consolidated School principal, Ray McCraw, withdrew approval for his permanency application. McCraw said that Toben's classes had deteriorated.

Toben said that McCraw felt threatened by his qualifications - Arts degrees from Melbourne and Wellington universities, a doctorate from Stuttgart University and 17 years' teaching experience in Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

Goroke is in far western Victoria. In a small town, small school atmosphere, rumors spread that McCraw was unhappy with Toben. He became something of an outcast in the staffroom. Some pupils began to disrupt his classes. Victoria - unlike other states - has no provision for formal inspection of teachers thought to be unsatisfactory. Toben asked several times for inspection. Instead, in mid-1984, a "support group" was set up. It comprised McCraw and three other teachers as well as Toben's nominee, fellow teacher Glenn Duncan. After four weeks' observation the group agreed that Toben's classes were unruly and that his teaching methods were inappropriate.

Duncan - who signed the group's report with some reservations - recently told *The Bulletin* that Toben "didn't really get a fair go" and that his problems were the result of a "personality clash" with McCraw, compounded by philosophical differences, which had gradually infected the whole school.

Next, a formal inquiry was held in October 1984. It was conducted jointly by a union official and a senior officer of the Victorian Ministry of Education who wrote to Toben beforehand saying that the inquiry was ""act-finding, rather than judgmental". Despite this, the inquiry endorsed the support group's assessment and expressed a "strong preference" that Toben be "dismissed from the teaching service".

Toben's case was finally heard by the then Director-General of Victorian Education, Dr Norman Curry. According to Toben - and this has not been denied by the ministry - Curry said: "Give me a good reason why I should not act on the inquiry's recommendation that you be dismissed."

Normally, these hearings are quasi-judicial - both sides call and question witnesses. In his case, Curry questioned Toben and four of his supporters but Toben did not have a chance to question McCraw. Toben was not represented. On February 4, 1985, Curry informed Toben that he had been dismissed for "incompetence". Since then, Toben - who now drives a school bus - has been trying to re-enter the teaching profession. The ministry has said that it will re-employ him after "evidence of successful teaching". But no school, so far, has been prepared to take him on. The Ombudsman has refused to investigate without evidence of "clear injustice". That, however, is precisely what Toben hoped an investigation would determine.

Toben's former union, the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association, told *The Bulletin* that correct procedures had been observed in his case as far as it was concerned.

A senior state educator, who requested anonymity [Steven Macphersons], admitted that "...it's not a fair world...Toben was not the worst teacher in the system and there are hundreds who are the same...Toben may have been unlucky..."

Bad luck or injustice? Professor Lauchlan Chipman, of Wollongong University, said that "even awkward and

unpopular people have rights". He said Toben's case "typified the fate of the one-off model in Australia. While school authorities are making determined efforts to lift teaching performance and elaborate procedures are in place to ensure that this does not occur at the

expense of teachers' rights, it would be ironic if one of the few sacked for incompetence turned out not to have deserved it.

<http://northcoastvoices.blogspot.com.au/2010/11/circumspect-tony-abbott-who-da-thunk-it.html>

## ... fast forward from the 1980s to 2014...

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### Teacher wins \$1.3 million payout over 'feral' students

Yahoo!7 Pty Ltd September 16, 2014, 6:23 pm

**A traumatized teacher has been awarded a payout of more than a million dollars for being forced to deal with 'feral' students. Kate Jones reports.**

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/vic/video/watch/25006968/teacher-wins-1-3-million-payout-over-feral-students/>

### Former teacher Peter Doulis awarded damages over 'unruly' students

Jane Lee and Jewel Topsfield, September 5, 2014

The Victorian Education Department could face a wave of law suits after a judge awarded about \$1.2 million in damages to a former teacher who developed chronic depression after he was forced to teach the worst behaved students.

Peter Doulis 48, sued the state for negligence, saying he had suffered a mental breakdown after he was allocated an unduly heavy workload of "feral" classes at Werribee Secondary College between 1998 and 2004.

In 2000, Werribee Secondary College divided its years 8, 9 and 10 classes into five streams - accelerated, high achievers, medium achievers, low achievers and foundation.

Mr Doulis told the Supreme Court the bottom classes included students who had ADHD, autism, dyslexia and acquired brain injuries, while most of the other students were very badly behaved.



**Peter Doulis Photo: Pat Scala**

Supreme Court Justice Timothy Ginnane ruled on Friday that the school breached its duty of care to Mr Doulis because it did not reduce the number of difficult classes he had to teach or monitor or support him when he returned to work.

Solicitor Michael Magazanik from Slater and Gordon Lawyers said the decision was important because it recognised that teachers who were really struggling had to be supported by their schools.

"We had plenty of calls from teachers during the trial and I suspect there are significant numbers of teachers in Peter's position," Mr Magazanik said.

"It will force a lot of principals and schools around the state to sit up and take notice because the judge made it quite clear that Werribee Secondary College completely failed Peter Doulis.

"They knew his mental health was deteriorating and they did absolutely nothing for him. They just left him there to sink and he did and he has had to wear the appalling cost of that for 10 years now."

Mr Doulis was sworn at and abused by students in his classes.

He once broke up an incident where a student was holding another student down in the corridor and singeing his jumper with a flame thrower made out of a can of deodorant and a lighter. Another student was suspended for swearing, splitting open a student's head and breaking a window.

Justice Ginnane said that Mr Doulis told the school about his difficulties with his workload in a meeting with principal Steve Butyn and assistant principals William Hatzis and Gregory Lentini in September 2003. "I do not consider that a reasonable person would have relied on Mr Doulis to fix the problem himself by the measures that he proposed, of lessening his non-teaching duties or seeking to teach elsewhere."

Justice Ginnane said it was "reasonably foreseeable" that Mr Doulis might suffer a psychiatric injury because of his teaching responsibilities and that the state had owed him a duty to take care to avoid him from developing the condition.

However Justice Ginnane did not believe a number of Mr Doulis' other claims, including allegations that another teacher had sexually abused a student, and that other teachers at the college had bullied him, which he said affected his credibility as a witness. The judge said he ruled on the case based on fact findings supported by other witnesses.

The judge awarded Mr Doulis an estimated \$1.2 million in damages. This included \$300,000 for pain, suffering and loss of enjoyment in life, \$466,433 for past economic loss and about \$500,000 for future economic loss.

The exact quantity of future economic loss will be decided at a later hearing

Mr Doulis told The Saturday Age the finding acknowledged the stress that teachers were put under and the support they needed.

"The support that the finding does give to teachers in the future is valuable."

He said he had received training for teaching gifted students at the school but nothing to help him with the most challenging students.

Werribee Secondary College's acting principal, Kevin O'Neil said parents sent their students to the school because of the streaming model, which had led to it performing higher than similar schools in the VCE.

"All of our teachers are given classes across levels and we do not disproportionately allocate any teachers to any one level. We no longer allow teachers to request to teach at only one level."

Justice Ginnane noted that Mr Doulis was only one of 100 teachers at the College and that his experiences related to events that happened more than a decade ago.

"The evidence at trial established that the College is now one of the finest schools in the western suburbs of Melbourne," the judge said.

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/former-teacher-peter-doulis-awarded-damages-over-unruly-students-20140905-10cx5r.html>

## Former Werribee College teacher Wins total payout of \$1.279m over 'feral' children

Updated 16 Sep 2014, 6:42pm

**A teacher who had a major psychological breakdown after dealing with "feral" students at a Melbourne school has been awarded a further \$550,000 in compensation, bringing his total payout to \$1.279 million.**



**PHOTO: The court has awarded Peter Doulis a total of \$1.279 million for future earnings and compensation.**

Fairfax/Getty Images

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**RELATED STORY: Teacher awarded \$770k for dealing with 'feral' students**

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Peter Doulis, a former employee at Werribee College in Victoria, was awarded the payout by the Supreme Court in compensation for future earnings.

Earlier this month the court awarded him almost \$770,000 in damages.

Mr Doulis took legal action against the Victorian Government after suffering a breakdown when allocated some of the college's most challenging students between 1998 and 2004.

He described how "feral" students would be "virtually crawling up the wall" before classes and in one instance a student, armed with a makeshift flame thrower, singed another student's jumper.

The court found the school, and therefore the state, had breached its duty to Mr Doulis by not removing him from the challenging classes, known as low and foundation classes.

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**AUDIO: A judge has awarded further compensation The World Today**

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Mr Doulis left court without making any comment but at an earlier appearance said it was never about the money.

He said he loved teaching but he had been put in an unfair position that left him with a great deal of stress and anxiety.

The state is also expected to pay Mr Doulis's legal bills of about \$380,000.

Teacher 'severely damaged' by experience at school

Mr Doulis's lawyer, Michael Magazanik, said they offered to settle the claim for a fraction of the payout some time ago. "But the department wouldn't deal with him, considering him to have no claim at all," he said.

Mr Magazanik said Mr Doulis was worried the Education Department may appeal against the decision. "He very much hopes that they don't. We've just got to wait and see. There's two weeks for them to decide whether or not they're going to appeal," he said. Peter was severely damaged by his experience at Werribee Secondary College and there's no quick fixes here. This win doesn't immediately repair his mental health."

Mr Magazanik said his law firm has been approached by a number of other teachers at Werribee Secondary College.

"These cases are very hard to win. This is not a case about stress or overwork," he said.

"Peter succeeded because he was able to prove that he brought to the attention of the principals at Werribee Secondary College the fact that his health was in steep decline. The school sat on its hands and did nothing for him."

Victorian Premier Denis Napthine said the Government would examine the decision before deciding on an appeal.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-09-16/teacher-wins-increased-compensation-payout-over-22feral22-chi/5746712>

## LAW & ORDER Teacher Peter Doulis wins \$1.3m payout after unruly students drive him to the brink

**EMILY PORTELLI, HERALD SUN, SEPTEMBER 16, 2014 11:30AM**

**A VICTORIAN teacher driven to the brink by unruly students including one who made a flamethrower in class will pocket close to \$1.3 million from taxpayers.**



**Teacher Peter Doulis will pocket almost \$1.3 million after a court win**

Peter Doulis has today been awarded more than half a million dollars for lost future earnings, increasing his total taxpayer-funded pay check to around \$1.3 million.

The Department of Education was also ordered by the Supreme Court to fork out for the former Werribee Secondary College teacher's legal costs, which could total up to \$380,000.

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**[MORE: Teacher wins payout over unruly students](#)**

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Mr Droulis, 48, successfully argued that he suffered a nervous breakdown and continues to suffer from a major depressive condition after teaching classes full of the school's most challenging students, including some with ADHD, Asperger's syndrome and dyslexia. Slater & Gordon lawyer Michael Magazanik said Mr Doulis offered several years ago to settle the claim for a "small fraction" of the \$1,279,751 awarded to him. "But the department wouldn't deal with him. They said he had no claim at all so we've had to push on for years after that," Mr Magazanik said outside court.

"Now the department will pay him close to \$1.3 million as well as a huge amount in legal costs to Peter's lawyers and their own lawyers — and for nothing when

several years ago they could have settled this for a fraction of that."

Mr Magazanik said Mr Doulis was grateful for his legal win — which could be appealed within the next fortnight by the state government — but was focusing on fixing his mental health.

The lawyer said he had been approached by other teachers from the school, as well as employees in other professions, as a result of this case.

"Peter succeeded because he was able to prove that he'd bought to the attention of the principal at Werribee Secondary College the fact that his health was in steep decline," Mr Magazanik said.

"He told them that in writing, he passed on information from a psychologist and the school sat on its hands and did nothing for him and watched his health go down the gurgler."

Justice Timothy Ginnane today finalised costs orders made last week and awarded Mr Doulis \$550,000 in damages for future economic loss.

The \$1.27m award also includes \$300,000 in general damages, \$337,090 in past loss of earnings and \$70,000 interest on lost wages.

State government representatives opposed Mr Doulis' barrister's submission that the teacher's legal bill was around \$380,000.

Justice Ginnane ordered the amount of costs to be paid by the government be dealt with at a later date.

In October last year, the court heard the students had a propensity for violence, often fought in class and were regularly suspended.

One had made a flamethrower in class; another had punched a fellow student in the mouth.

The court heard school authorities had ignored Mr Doulis's repeated appeals for help.

"They were badly behaved. It was very difficult to discipline them and impossible to teach them," he said.

[emily.portelli@news.com.au](mailto:emily.portelli@news.com.au)

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/law-order/teacher-peter-doulis-wins-13m-payout-after-unruly-students-drive-him-to-the-brink/story-fni0fee2-1227060093296>

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## **WHAT MADE JULIA TICK... that's not explained in her book**

**LARRY PICKERING**

As Julia prepares to grace our screens and flog her "tell-nothing" book this evening, I've decided to revisit and update my assessment from over two years ago of our most enigmatic Prime Minister ever. Nothing much has changed and to be honest, she fascinates me to distraction. A bloke who is over 35 and still unattached is either a serial mummy's boy, is gay, a drug dealer/user or a social misfit... all 'no-go' areas for the nubile, hot-blooded woman. But surely there must be more to it than that!

I mean Gillard was never prepared to sink her hard-core communist heart into playing happy families.

Now, I could be wrong but it appears single women dating married men is much more prevalent an occurrence than single men dating married women. Only an observation but deserving of further scrutiny.

According to a study conducted by the University of Louisville, many single women tend to engage in something the study referred to as "mate copying." In other words, women tend to believe that if another woman has already collared a man, there must be something this man possesses that is worth having.

Maybe it's because these women love a competitive challenge,

a no-strings drama or simply the thrill of "theft". Whatever the case, many women have revealed that sex with married men is awesome. Why is that?

The study referred to Angela, 28, who enjoys a high-position in a big corporation and had an affair with a married man who worked in her office. Angela told the study, "The sex was an incredible thrill because we had to be careful all the time. I would end up holding on to a cabinet in the office supplies room while he penetrated me with quick thrusts during lunchtime, it would excite me like no other sex I've ever had." She admits it was tons of fun, until the "relationship" started moving from lust to emotion. "I began behaving like a possessive child and that's when I knew it was time to let go." "But", Angela continued, "I knew many single women who not only enjoyed lusty relationships with married men, they would take risks that I thought were simply immoral, like having sex in the married couple's bed."

Maybe the "no-strings" thing is attractive to women. Pure lust requires no need to meet boring parents or conduct bothersome courting procedures. Tearing at each others' underclothes in a frenzied sweat against a filing cabinet before

returning to work sporting a crimson glow has fulfilled many a female fantasy.

But Julia Gillard's predilection for married men poses an interesting psychological quandary. Women with a strong competitive streak are also addicted to married men.

Such women may be willing to take married men as lovers if only to prove that they are superior to the wife when it comes to sexual and/or intellectual prowess. That shouldn't be too hard, as torrid lust and intellectual intercourse within marriage normally wanes with familiarity... after a year or so of different positions you had better decide if you actually like each other. This single female phenomenon may have little to do with the desirability of the man but the fact that she has convinced him to cheat on his wife in order to be with her represents a huge power trip.

A woman who consistently lusts after other women's "unattainable" husbands is not looking for a commitment of love. The middle-aged single man is not attractive to the predatory female simply because he is still on the shelf, apparently unclaimed.

The predatory single female generally prefers a man who is married, rich, powerful, successful or famous and with a flexible itinerary. Success with this man will fulfil a need to augment her worth. It is a cruel confirmation that she is preferred over the woman he has at home anxiously checking the clock.

Then there is the kinky pleasure of being in the presence of the married man's wife. The smug "if-only-you-knew" factor is a form of covert power over another oblivious female. So, what common thread in her relationships indicates Julia Gillard's motivation? We are not supposed to ask that sort of thing you say! Why the hell not? If we had a single male Prime Minister who consistently had affairs with married women it would have surely justified media interest. If you don't think it's a fair question then you don't believe in sexual equality. Gillard is so obviously a very sexual woman. Her overt flirting with Barack Obama is testimony to that. She displays that come-to-bed look with aplomb but can switch to an attacking Pit-Bull bitch in an instant.

Her list of uni-sexual affairs is a long one, but the list of affairs with married men with children is also long, and worthy of note:

- **Michael O'Connor**, ruggedly good-looking and an unabashed communist. He was a founding partner in Gillard's Socialist Forum with Jenny Macklin. He was also a militant powerbroker of the BLF/CFMEU and is now a CFMEU boss. Apparently happily married with children. Union power and exciting mob-style thuggery was an attraction for Gillard. (A relationship of over 6 years but had overlapped other relationships.)

- **Peter Gordon**, of Slater & Gordon. Married with children and Senior Partner. Gillard's rather brief stint with Gordon was a result of his Presidency of the Western Bulldogs AFL Club. Gordon and Gillard regularly spent time together at the Club and Gillard has supported the Bulldogs ever since, both emotionally and, as Prime Minister, with taxpayer funds. Gordon had no choice but to sack her from the law firm but has resolutely defended her since.

- **Bruce Wilson**. Happily married with two boys. He was a fraudulent crook and an AWU strongman with a wad of cash that would choke a horse. The exciting world of union corruption was an instant attraction for Gillard and she knowingly participated in rorts of over \$1 million. Wilson's marriage to a Swiss woman collapsed after he and Gillard's fraudulent activities were discovered. (A relationship of over four years.)

- Trade Minister at the time, **Craig Emerson**. Happily married with three children, his rise to power through ANU academia and his assertive manner was also an attraction for Gillard. Emerson and his wife divorced after this relationship became public. Emerson's main claim to fame, apart from his demented eye rotation, was that he drank Gillard's contact

lenses after she inadvertently left them in a glass of water in the bathroom.

- **Tim Mathieson**. Well, Tim breaks the mould. He was divorced with children and had another daughter on the side. Gillard began this relationship just prior to Rudd's election. Mathieson, a drink-driving yobbo, left a long trail of debt wherever he went, he was a loser, but it was clear that Gillard needed Mathieson for a different role.

Gillard's Prime Ministerial ambitions were being hatched with the help of Bill Shorten and Bill Ludwig, both powerbrokers in the AWU and with rap sheets that would have got them executive positions in the Cosa Nostra.

Rudd was a universally hated Public Service prig but he was their only likely entree into government and anyway a change in leadership could be made later... and Rudd in his arrogant oblivion never saw that change coming.

Gillard's choice of Mathieson was appropriate. She had no sexual attraction to him but his dimwittedness ensured he could never be in competition with, or a threat to, her lofty ambitions. And for God's sake, we could never have had a single female Prime Minister living alone in The Lodge, could we?

None of her previous partners, including her girlfriend Julie, could have successfully moved into The Lodge with her.

So, leaving the hapless Mathieson and lesbian relationships out of the thread, there is a commonality in Gillard's male affairs:

All men were older.

All were married.

All had children.

All wielded power.

All had dodgy union connections and lots of available cash (albeit mostly belonging to other people) and, All were beguiled by Gillard's sexuality.

Yet strangely, all these affairs ended amicably. Even now, Gillard and her ex-men hold not a shred of bitterness for each other. Craig Emerson and even Bruce Wilson and Peter Gordon rush to defend her. What does this mean? It simply means they were not affairs of the heart. True emotional love mostly ends in prolonged hurt and acrimony.

Not one of Gillard's affairs did that.

Gillard was attracted to the intoxicating lustful excitement of power, union corruption, rivers of illicit money and an ego driven, covert competition with married men's wives and she has never felt the need to hide her sexual targeting of any man. Wilson's wife at the time simply learnt to live with his infidelity. Emerson's wife couldn't. O'Connor's wife was furious but got over it and "charity shag" Mathieson simply grabbed his rod and went fishing.

And why were these men attracted to Gillard in the first place? Well, I'm a little uncomfortable saying this, but she definitely exudes a type of bewitching sensuality.

A sensuality even Barack Obama found difficult to ignore. He exhibited an instant and overt attraction to her, much to Michelle's Obama's chagrin.

It was obvious Julia and Barack were made for each other and it's my suspicion they could have lived happily ever after, for at least a year or two.

After all these two soul buddies had much in common... they both made an absolute mess of whatever they touched.

<http://pickeringpost.com/blog/larry-pickering/3>

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[If Pickering is correct in what he has written, then bisexual Gillard is devoid of all moral values, and she exemplifies the consumer throw-away society where personal responsibility has no home. It is an immature and infantile attitude towards the seriousness of life, which means that a willing sacrifice has to be made for the sake of the future generation. Wagner showed how those seeking POWER have to relinquish/sacrifice LOVE. For whatever reason Gillard doesn't care for love. - ed.AI]